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Helping People. Changing Lives.
A Celebration of Families and Individuals Achieving Self-Sufficiency

In the News

Reprinted from the Wall Street Journal

CEDA, ComEd and Peoples Gas Host Energy Assistance Fairs

October 28, 2009

PR Newswire

Utility bill payment assistance programs are available to residents now until funds are exhausted

To help eligible customers prepare for cold temperatures, CEDA, ComEd and Peoples Gas will hold a series of community events to make residents aware of energy assistance programs that are available now.

Representatives from CEDA, ComEd and Peoples Gas will be on-site to help attendees determine the best options available to receive one-time utility bill payment assistance through programs such as LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program), ComEd Residential Special Hardship Fund or Peoples Gas Share the Warmth. ComEd also plans to distribute more than 6,000 energy efficiency kits during assistance fairs this winter.

"These community energy fairs present a wonderful opportunity where residents can go to get personal attention and information needed to help them manage their energy costs this winter," said Jennifer Smith, director of CEDA's Home Energy Assistance Programs.

The utility assistance fairs will be held at the following locations: – Saturday, Nov. 7 - Walter Reed Elementary School (6350 S. Stewart) 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

- Tuesday, Nov. 10 - Rainbow PUSH Headquarters (930 E. 50th Street) 4 p.m.- 7 p.m.
- Saturday, Nov. 14 - Westside Technical (2800 S. Western) 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- Saturday, Nov. 21 - Olive Harvey College (10001 S. Woodlawn) 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 5 - Malcolm X College (1900 W. Van Buren) 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 12 - Daley College (7500 S. Pulaski) 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Residents applying for a utility assistance program should bring the following documentation:

- Proof of identification as customer of record.
- Proof of household income for the last 30 days.
- Original Social Security Cards for all members of the household.
- Original ComEd and Peoples Gas bill (within 30 days).
- Current rental lease agreement if utilities are included in rent payments.
- Proof of home ownership for emergency furnace.

Starting Nov. 2, ComEd will introduce its Fresh Start Program, which provides assistance to any LIHEAP-approved space-heating account. Additionally, LIHEAP approved space-heating customers may qualify to participate in the Fresh Start Arrearage Reduction Program, which provides monthly credits of up to \$150 a month for qualifying customers who begin and continue to pay their electric bills on time.

ComEd continues to offer its Residential Special Hardship program, a one-time variable grant of up to \$1,000 for eligible customers with household incomes up to 400 percent of the federal poverty level who can document a hardship situation. These efforts are part of ComEd CARE, a \$15 million portfolio of programs that provide assistance to customers in need, including low-income households, working families and seniors. ComEd has distributed nearly \$11.5 million in customer assistance in 2009.

Later this year, Peoples Gas will open its Share the Warmth program. Peoples Gas customers whose income is at or below 200 percent of the poverty level may qualify for Share the Warmth matching grants of up to \$200 toward their energy bill.

On November 7, Peoples Gas will host its sixth annual Team H.E.A.T. (Home Energy Assistance Together) community service winterization project. More than 75 employees from Peoples Gas, along with members of community organizations and Chicago Public School students, will weatherize the homes of low-income and fixed-income residents in the Englewood community. Weatherizing consists of applying weather stripping and



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caulking around doors and windows and covering windows with plastic sheeting—all of which helps residents conserve energy and lower heating bills.

Residents can employ the following low-cost tips to save money and energy this winter: – Set your thermostat to the lowest comfortable setting. Each degree you lower your thermostat could save up to three percent on your annual heating costs.

- At night, draw shades and drapes to reduce heat loss. During the day, open shades and drapes on the sunny side of the house to add natural warmth to your home.
- Remove window air conditioners if possible, or install an air conditioner cover to eliminate drafts.
- Inspect caulking and weather-stripping around all windows, doors and any opening for utility services. A drafty house lets warm air escape and costs more to heat, so replace caulking and weather-stripping as necessary. As a rule of thumb, if you can see light through a crack, it needs weather stripping.

To learn more about CEDA assistance programs, visit www.cedaorg.net or call (800) 571-CEDA (2332).

To learn more about ComEd assistance programs, visit www.ComEd.com or call (888) 806-2273.

To learn more about Peoples Gas assistance programs, visit www.peoplesgasdelivery.com or call (866) 556-6001.

CEDA is one of the nation's largest non-profit organizations that serves more than 375,000 individuals annually and operates over 40 programs throughout Cook County in the areas of education, housing, economic development, family and children services, health and nutrition, and several others.

Commonwealth Edison Company (ComEd) is a unit of Chicago-based Exelon Corporation (NYSE: EXC), one of the nation's largest electric utilities with approximately 5.4 million customers. ComEd provides service to approximately 3.8 million customers across Northern Illinois, or 70 percent of the state's population.

Peoples Gas is a regulated natural gas delivery company that serves 840,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in the City of Chicago. The company is a subsidiary of Integrys Energy Group, Inc. (NYSE: TEG). For more information on Peoples Gas, visit the company's web site: peoplesgasdelivery.com.